The Cleveland Museum of Art

Press Release

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MUSEUM ATTRACTS HIGHEST ATTENDANCE IN FOUR YEARS—
***PHARAOHS* CONTRIBUTES $10 MILLION TO LOCAL ECONOMY**

(Cleveland, OH) The Cleveland Museum of Art announced today attendance figures for 1996 of 535,503 visitors, an increase of 16% (75,406) from 1995 and an increase of 24% (103,844) from 1994. It is the highest yearly attendance since 1992 when the CMA celebrated its 75th anniversary drawing 679,797 people; and it's the second highest attendance since 1988. The Cleveland Museum of Art has surpassed the half-million mark four times since 1977.

The increase is largely attributed to the success of the museum's **Pharaohs** exhibition last spring (which drew 137,455 visitors) and an increase in summer evenings attendance by 27% while meeting exhibition attendance goals for the other three major exhibitions of the year: **Transformations in Cleveland Art, Urban Evidence** and **Legacy of Light** (which is still on view through February 2).

A visitor survey designed and tabulated by Case Western Reserve University's Arts Management Program and implemented by the museum during the **Pharaohs** exhibition found that 40.2% of the museum's visitors were from outside the metropolitan Cleveland area (approximately the six county region of Lorain, Medina, Cuyahoga, Lake, Geauga and Ashtabula). These out-of-town visitors normally account for about 30% of the total according to other visitor surveys taken over the last year and a half. Approximately 16% of all visitors to ***Pharaohs*** came from outside the state of Ohio.

For **Pharaohs**, some 77% of the out-of-town visitors cited that exhibition as the main reason for visiting Cleveland. The report estimates that these visitors contributed $10 million to the local economy. This figure is based upon visitor spending at the museum and their own estimates of spending on transportation, lodging, dining, shopping and entertainment during their visit to Cleveland. It does not include the spending of the 82,198 visitors from within the metropolitan area.

According to Robert P. Bergman, director of the CMA: "We are very pleased to have significantly increased our attendance this past year. Based on what we know about the

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experience of museums in other cities where major new attractions were opened, we have managed to reverse the trend by increasing rather than decreasing visitorship. Therefore, this news is exceptionally gratifying. We are also delighted to know that we are bringing significant numbers of cultural tourists to Cleveland—a visitorship that impacts our local economy in a substantial way. These attendance figures, along with the results of the **Pharaohs** visitor study, support the view that the CMA contributes significantly to Cleveland's economic vitality at the same time that it serves as an aesthetic, educational, and cultural beacon for our community. Our thanks to Margaret Wyszomirski, John Lucci and the others at CWRU who helped us with the **Pharaohs** visitor study."

The Cleveland Museum of Art is preparing for its next major exhibition—*Fabergé in America* (March 9 through May 11)— which is expected to draw 125,000 to 150,000 visitors.

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